

LEADERSHIP PROFILE REPORT

FEBRUARY 2025



MONTGOMERY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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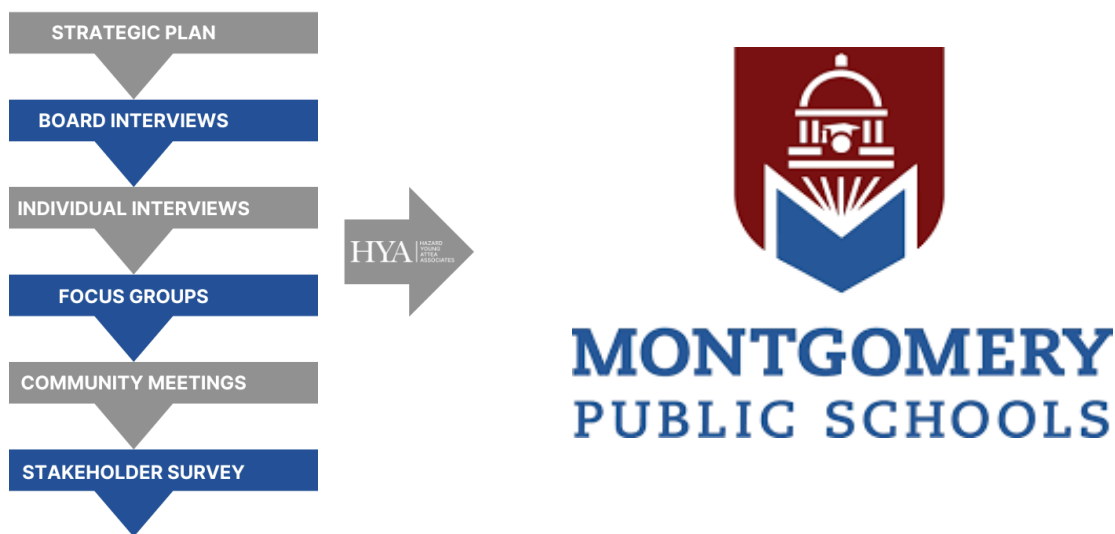
Purpose

The Montgomery Public Schools (MPS) community is seeking a transformational leader who can build trust, improve student outcomes, and foster a culture of accountability and collaboration. Through extensive stakeholder engagement—including surveys, focus groups, and community meetings—this leadership profile outlines the key characteristics and competencies desired in the next superintendent. The profile reflects the collective aspirations of parents, teachers, administrators, board members, and community leaders, ensuring alignment between leadership selection and the district’s strategic priorities.

The search team extends its gratitude to everyone who participated in the focus groups, completed the survey, and to the Montgomery Public School District’s staff members who supported our meetings.

Profile Development

HYA Associates collected data from multiple sources to develop the Leadership Profile and arrive at a set of desired characteristics for recruitment and selection of the next Superintendent of Montgomery Public Schools.



Desired Characteristics

From the results of the survey, focus groups, and interviews, desired characteristics for the next Montgomery Public Schools Superintendent emerge. Even when conflicting, contrasting, inconsistent, and contradictory desires are reported (which is normal when surveying disparate groups), common themes emerge that are important to most constituents. The work of HYA Associates is to find where consensus exists. This is a tremendous opportunity for the entirety of Montgomery Public Schools to

select a leader that will prioritize relationships, commit to sustained long-term improvements and commit to be with the district for years to come.

The “Priorities for the Future” section of the survey illustrates the common desires of respondent groups. From the survey results, two statements garnered top support from 5 out of 6 constituent groups:

- Recruit, employ, and retain effective personnel throughout Montgomery Public Schools
- Be visible throughout Montgomery Public Schools and actively engaged in community life

There were two statements that garnered top support from 4 out of 6 constituent groups:

- Establish a culture of high expectations for all students and personnel
- Foster a positive, professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators

When juxtaposing the voices from the focus groups and the data from the survey, the following desired characteristics emerged:



Commitment to Student Achievement and Equal Opportunities for All Students

The next superintendent must be laser-focused on student achievement and closing opportunity gaps particularly for historically underserved students, including English Learners (EL) and students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Montgomery Public Schools (MPS) face significant challenges in student achievement, with notable disparities among different student groups. Economic disparities significantly impact student performance within the school district. In Montgomery County, 32.1% of children live in poverty, compared to the statewide rate of 26%. This economic challenge correlates with academic performance, as students in high-poverty areas often face additional barriers to learning.

Despite recent gains in overall performance during the 2023-2024 school year, proficiency levels in core subjects remain concerning:

- **English Language Arts (ELA):** Approximately 36% of students scored proficiently on standardized tests.
- **Mathematics:** 16.43% of students demonstrated proficiency.
- **Science:** Proficiency was observed in 23.41% of students.

In addition, chronic absenteeism increased by 2.21%, reaching 28.54%, indicating that over a quarter of students are frequently absent.

Board members, teachers, and administrators discussed the need for a leader, “Who is willing to roll up their sleeves and get into the schools to see and address issues.” One community member shared, “We want someone who genuinely cares about all of our children, not just test scores.” It was frequently noted that there are stark contrasts between some of Montgomery Public Schools’ highest performing schools and some of the lowest performing schools. References between magnet schools and non-magnet schools were frequently cited. A student noted, “Some schools have different extracurricular activities from our school. We should have the same opportunities as other schools.” The next superintendent must work with the board and community to equalize opportunities across schools by working with the business community, state officials, local officials, and community members to ensure that resources are provided to increase access to equal opportunities within all schools.

Visionary Leadership and Strategic Planning

The MPS community seeks a leader with a clear, compelling vision for the future, who can effectively plan and manage the district’s long-term trajectory while executing a curriculum audit to assess and enhance instructional quality. Teachers and principals communicated that they wanted a leader who would see the assets within the teaching and learning program and build upon the district’s strengths. One principal shared, “We don’t need another superintendent coming in with a new plan. We need someone who will assess what is working, build on our strengths, and make real improvements without causing unnecessary disruptions.” It was expressed that the next leader should utilize the assets of the community, particularly of the business community, to envision new, progressive programs that will continue to drive the Montgomery County and state economy. The district has a thriving business community, and it will be critical for the next superintendent to continue to engage the business

community, regional universities, and the local government in expanding CTE and dual-enrollment opportunities to continue to improve college and career readiness.

Servant Leadership and Community Engagement

Stakeholders consistently emphasized the need for a visible, engaged, and collaborative leader who prioritizes relationships with students, families, teachers, and community organizations. There is much work to be done in Montgomery Public Schools, and multiple stakeholders spoke about the need for a humble leader who will prioritize being in the school district working on school improvement, not developing state or national prominence. A PTA representative communicated, “We need someone who will walk the halls, attend community events, and actually listen to parents and teachers.” Similarly, another parent shared, “If the superintendent isn’t seen and doesn’t take time to hear from families, how can we trust them to lead our schools effectively?”

There is a clear need for strengthening parent engagement activities. Many parents do not feel heard or valued. They expressed frustration with the lack of organized and proactive communication to better engage families. There is inconsistent district-level parent engagement happening, and there is an opportunity to expand parent involvement both at the district level and at the school level. Overall, there was a sentiment that parent involvement has not been a priority of the district, and it is the hope of community members and parent stakeholders that the next superintendent will support efforts to effect change through new parent engagement policies and active solicitation of parent input and support through school and district committees.

Transparency, Trust, and Ethical Leadership

Restoring trust is a critical task for the next superintendent. Stakeholders expressed frustration over past lack of transparency, political conflicts, and leadership turnover. The next leader must be ethical, honest, and committed to open communication. A community member shared, “Montgomery has suffered from too many superintendents leaving after a short time. We need someone who will stay, who will build relationships, and who won’t treat this as just another job.” Again, the next superintendent must be a coalition builder who understands how to effectively engage stakeholders in the core work of the school district. Cross-functional teams that empower director level leaders, principals, and teacher leaders are sought. A principal shared, “Many superintendents come into this district and do not value our insight. We are educated people who have been here fighting for our schools despite the constant churn. We are not backwoods people. We need someone who will get to know us, trust our expertise, and support us as we work with our communities.” It was shared that the next superintendent does not need to be a Montgomery County native, but they should understand the cultural DNA of the South and/or Alabama.

Structures must be established to provide clear, transparent communication to all stakeholders, including parents, teachers, board members, politicians, and business leaders. The next superintendent should expand student forums to ensure that he/she has a pulse on the student experience and is working to continue to enhance the student experience based upon students’ feedback. One student shared, “The food is not very good, and we often run out of food in the cafeteria. When this happens, we go to class hungry.” These types of experiences are easily solved working in collaboration with students and offices

that are responsible for such functions. What is important is to have a leader willing to listen, investigate, and resolve these types of issues that will have a tremendous impact on school climate and culture.

Operational and Fiscal Stewardship

The next superintendent must demonstrate strong financial acumen, effective budget management, and the ability to allocate resources strategically to support student learning and district growth. Montgomery Public Schools has many buildings that are over 50 years old, and the differences between Montgomery's most modern schools and oldest schools are stark. The new superintendent must understand or quickly learn Alabama school funding formula and Alabama ad valorem school tax. The ability for the superintendent to demonstrate fiscal responsibility to state and local politicians and business leaders will be of utmost importance. A business leader stated, "We need a superintendent who understands that every dollar must be used to benefit students first. No more wasteful spending."

In recent years, the finances have stabilized, but the district continues to face significant financial management challenges with business leaders and board members highlighting the need for strong financial stewardship and budget transparency. The new superintendent must continue to refine practices and communicate about the budget in an open, transparent way, so that the community recognizes the district as good stewards of financial resources. In addition, there is a need for strategic resource allocation to optimize student support services and school facilities.

Strategic Priorities

Based on stakeholder input, the next superintendent must focus on:

- **Academic Excellence** – Raising student achievement, addressing equity, and closing opportunity gaps.
- **Trust and Community Engagement** – Rebuilding trust through transparency, visibility, and relationship-building.
- **Operational Effectiveness** – Ensuring sound financial management, fair hiring practices, and strategic resource allocation.
- **Stability and Long-Term Leadership** – Committing to Montgomery Public Schools for multiple years to sustain progress and institutional memory.

Focus Group Protocols

The structure of the focus groups was open, allowing for participants to build upon each other's comments. Session participants were told that their voice would remain confidential to allow for authentic and honest commentary. Participants were asked to respond to the following questions:

- What do stakeholders value regarding the schools? What strengths do they desire to retain and build upon?
- What are the issues this District currently faces, and will face in the next three to five years?

- What personal and professional characteristics are expected in a new Superintendent?



Survey Methodology

The survey results contained in this document are based on HYA's research. The survey addresses district quality and leadership standards in four performance areas:

Vision and Values (VV) - Leadership's ability to provide a clear and compelling vision for the future, align district programs to the broader vision of the district, and uphold high expectations for all stakeholders.

Teaching and Learning (TL) - Leadership's ability to guide educational programs, make data-driven decisions, and implement effective instructional change.

Community Engagement (CE) - Leadership's ability to be the voice of the district, engage with the community, and involve stakeholders in realizing the district's vision.

Management (M) - Leadership's ability to guide operations, manage resources, recruit and retain highly effective personnel, and create an equitable accountability system for all employees.

The district has considerable work to do at informing the community of the achievements of the district as this disaggregated group rated the district least favorably in all performance areas with only 20% or

less agreeing or strongly agreeing to the quality statements presented to them in the survey. Teachers, parents, and students are clustered together in their ratings of each of the four pillar areas in between administrators and community members, that is they rate the district more favorably than community members, but less favorably than administrators (see diagram on page 4 of the survey).

The survey results also suggest a balanced approach and skills necessary for the next leader in the areas of Vision and Values, Teaching and Learning, Community Engagement and Management as the top rated leadership profile characteristics were equally distributed between the four leadership pillars (see page 3 of the survey).

The survey detail follows which provides detailed information on these findings. Through the understanding of stakeholder's views regarding the state of the district and the desired profile of the next superintendent, the survey report will help the district prioritize desired characteristics.



Montgomery Public Schools - Superintendent Search Survey

HYA | HAZARD
YOUNG
ATTEA
ASSOCIATES

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METHODOLOGY

The survey results contained in this document are based on HYA's research related to superintendent leadership standards. The survey addresses both district performance and desired characteristics of the superintendent in relation to the following areas:

- Vision and Values (VV) - The leader's ability to provide a clear and compelling vision for the future, align district programs to the broader vision of the district, and uphold high expectations for all stakeholders
- Teaching and Learning (TL) - The leader's ability to guide educational programs, make data-driven decisions, and implement effective instructional change
- Community Engagement (CE) - The leader's ability to be the voice of the district, engage with the community, and involve stakeholders in realizing the district's vision
- Management (M) - The leader's ability to guide operations, manage resources, recruit and retain highly effective personnel, and create an equitable accountability system for all employees

Through the understanding of stakeholder's views regarding the state of the district and the desired profile of the next superintendent, this report will help the district prioritize the desired characteristics of the superintendent in a way that will advance the priorities of the community.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Montgomery Public Schools - Superintendent Search Survey was completed by 991 stakeholders. The largest stakeholder group surveyed were parents of students attending school. Parents of students attending school represented 40.7 percent of all respondents. Nearly a quarter of respondents were teacher/licensed staff. They made up the second most populous stakeholder group at 23.7 percent of all respondents. The third largest participant group were community members at 16.8 percent of all respondents.

Regarding the State of the District, the following statements were perceived to be district strengths:

- Technology is integrated into the classroom. (TL)
- Montgomery Public Schools engages with diverse racial, cultural and socio-economic groups. (CE)
- Montgomery Public Schools technology infrastructure is sufficient to support use of technology in the classroom. (M)
- Montgomery Public Schools is working to close achievement and opportunity gaps. (VV)
- Montgomery Public Schools employs effective teachers, administrators and support staff in its schools. (M)

The top-rated leadership profile characteristics constituents desire in a new superintendent are:

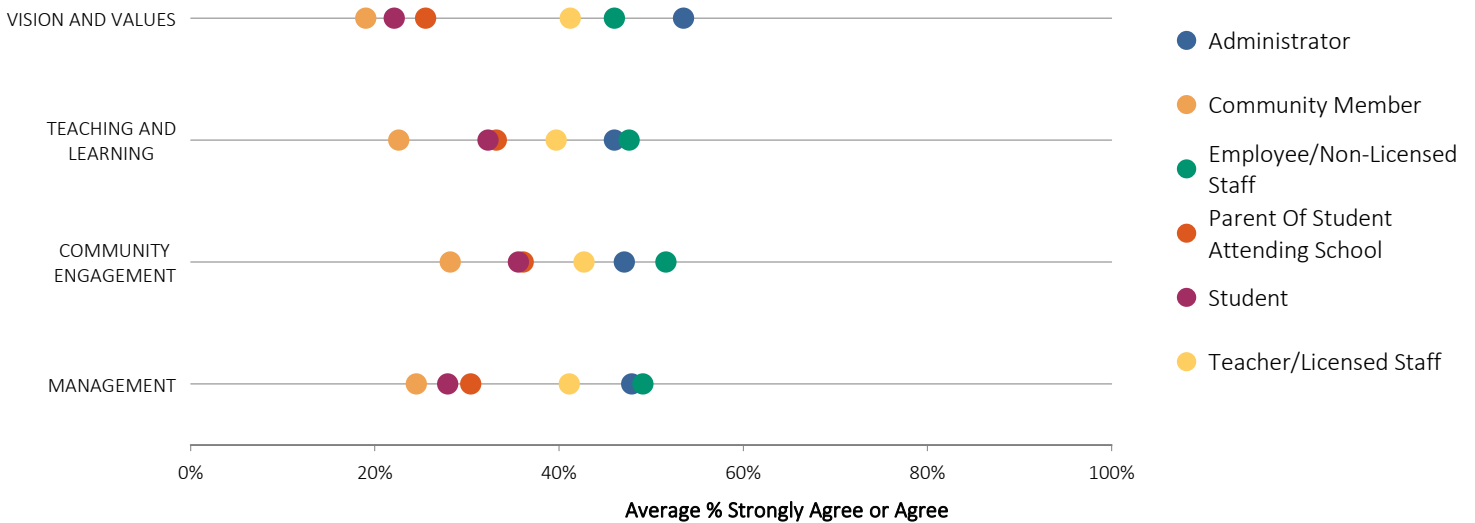
- Recruit, employ, and retain effective personnel throughout Montgomery Public Schools (M)
- Establish a culture of high expectations for all students and personnel (VV)
- Foster a positive, professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators (CE)
- Be visible throughout Montgomery Public Schools and actively engaged in community life (CE)
- Provide transparent communication (CE)

ANALYSIS

State of the District Summary

Respondents rated statements related to the state of the district on a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Each statement corresponds to one of the following constructs: Vision & Values, Teaching & Learning, Community Engagement, and Management. Overall results are presented below; results for individual items are reported in the appendix.

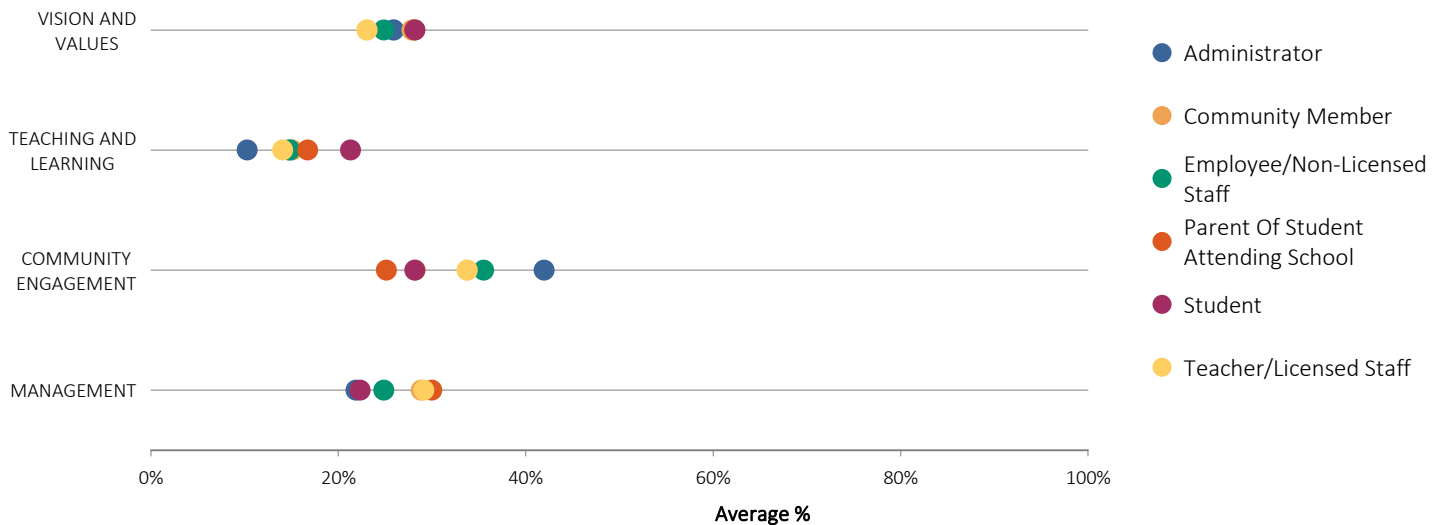
State of the District Results by Constituent Group



Leadership Profile Summary

Respondents were asked to select leadership statements that are most important in selecting a new superintendent. Each statement corresponds to one of the following constructs: Vision & Values, Teaching & Learning, Community Engagement, and Management. Overall results are presented below; results for individual items are reported on the next page.








































Leadership Profile Results by Constituent Group



LEADERSHIP PROFILE DETAILS

Respondents were asked to select 4 statements they deem most important in selecting a new superintendent. Results by constituent group are presented below. Each constituent group's top 4 most frequently selected statements are depicted by blue cells (reading the chart vertically); consensus is illustrated as multiple constituent groups selected the same statements (reading the chart horizontally).

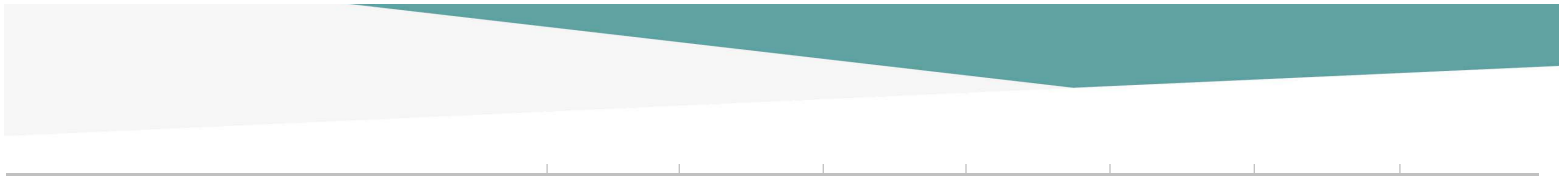
 Top 4

	All (991)	Administrator (59)	Community Member (166)	Employee/Non- Licensed Staff (44)	Parent Of Student Attending School (403)	Student (84)	Teacher/License d Staff (235)
Recruit, employ, and retain effective personnel throughout Montgomery Public Schools	51%						
Establish a culture of high expectations for all students and personnel	41%						
Foster a positive, professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators	41%						
Be visible throughout Montgomery Public Schools and actively engaged in community life	37%						
Provide transparent communication	33%						
Demonstrate a deep understanding of educational research and emerging best practices and implement strategies	30%						
Be an effective manager of Montgomery Public Schools' day-to-day operations	30%						
Provide a clear, compelling vision for the future	28%						
Effectively plan and manage the long-term financial health of Montgomery Public Schools	25%						
Understand and be sensitive to the needs of a diverse student population	24%						
Provide guidance for district-wide curriculum and instruction	21%						
Integrate personalized educational opportunities into the instructional program	14%						

APPENDIX I: STATE OF THE DISTRICT ITEM ANALYSIS

Percentages of parents, students, administrators, teachers, community members, and other constituents selecting 5 (Strongly Agree) or 4 (Agree) for each item are presented below.

	All (991)	Administrator (59)	Community Member (166)	Employee/Non- Licensed Staff (44)	Parent Of Student Attending School (403)	Student (84)	Teacher/License d Staff (235)
OVERALL							
Please rate the overall quality of education in Montgomery Public Schools.	15%	20%	6%	23%	19%	8%	15%
VISION AND VALUES							
Montgomery Public Schools provides a clear, compelling shared vision for the future.	32%	56%	16%	52%	28%	17%	45%
Montgomery Public Schools is heading in the right direction.	28%	56%	19%	43%	26%	18%	33%
Montgomery Public Schools has high performance standards for all students.	26%	46%	15%	41%	22%	21%	36%
Montgomery Public Schools makes decisions based on information from data and research.	27%	39%	14%	36%	22%	24%	42%
Montgomery Public Schools is working to close achievement and opportunity gaps.	35%	63%	28%	50%	29%	26%	44%
TEACHING AND LEARNING							
Montgomery Public Schools provides a well-rounded educational experience for all students.	23%	32%	16%	41%	22%	24%	26%
Teachers personalize instructional strategies to address individual learning needs.	33%	37%	22%	39%	26%	36%	51%
Montgomery Public Schools schools are safe.	34%	61%	23%	45%	36%	15%	34%
The social and emotional needs of students are being addressed.	21%	32%	10%	34%	20%	15%	25%
Students are on track to be ready for the next grade and ultimately college and career ready.	23%	34%	12%	39%	25%	27%	20%
Technology is integrated into the classroom.	66%	69%	48%	73%	68%	67%	74%
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT							
Montgomery Public Schools engages the community as a partner to improve the school system.	34%	54%	32%	52%	30%	19%	41%
There is transparent communication from Montgomery Public Schools.	30%	39%	17%	43%	33%	25%	32%
Montgomery Public Schools engages with diverse racial, cultural and socio-economic groups.	45%	42%	34%	55%	44%	55%	49%
MANAGEMENT							
Facilities are well maintained.	23%	36%	16%	30%	26%	21%	22%
Montgomery Public Schools is fiscally responsible.	29%	63%	27%	52%	24%	14%	33%
Montgomery Public Schools employs effective teachers, administrators and support staff in its schools.	35%	36%	28%	52%	32%	32%	41%
Employees are held accountable to high standards.	31%	32%	20%	45%	24%	24%	52%
Montgomery Public Schools technology infrastructure is sufficient to support use of technology in the classroom.	43%	63%	27%	59%	43%	36%	50%



APPENDIX II: LEADERSHIP PROFILE ITEM ANALYSIS

Respondents were asked to select 4 statements they deem most important in selecting a new superintendent. Results are presented below by constituent group.

	All (991)	Administrator (59)	Community Member (166)	Employee/Non- Licensed Staff (44)	Parent Of Student Attending School (403)	Student (84)	Teacher/License d Staff (235)
Recruit, employ, and retain effective personnel throughout Montgomery Public Schools	51%	49%	54%	48%	57%	30%	49%
Establish a culture of high expectations for all students and personnel	41%	51%	45%	36%	42%	20%	43%
Foster a positive, professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators	41%	61%	40%	48%	29%	31%	57%
Be visible throughout Montgomery Public Schools and actively engaged in community life	37%	53%	37%	45%	33%	43%	36%
Provide transparent communication	33%	46%	27%	43%	33%	24%	34%
Demonstrate a deep understanding of educational research and emerging best practices and implement strategies	30%	20%	30%	25%	36%	36%	23%
Be an effective manager of Montgomery Public Schools' day-to-day operations	30%	20%	28%	30%	30%	18%	37%
Provide a clear, compelling vision for the future	28%	27%	28%	34%	29%	42%	21%
Effectively plan and manage the long-term financial health of Montgomery Public Schools	25%	14%	26%	18%	27%	30%	25%
Understand and be sensitive to the needs of a diverse student population	24%	17%	22%	30%	24%	39%	20%
Provide guidance for district-wide curriculum and instruction	21%	15%	26%	16%	21%	14%	21%
Integrate personalized educational opportunities into the instructional program	14%	7%	8%	11%	18%	20%	12%

